

In the history of Sunderland Football Club it would hard to find two sets of players who experienced such a contrast in their careers on Wearside. That the two sets of players I am thinking about were also siblings is even more remarkable.



Billy Hughes was of course one of the heroes of the team that triumphed at Wembley in May 1973. Once described by Don Revie, Leeds United manager and himself a former Sunderland player, as "one of the most exciting players I've ever seen" Hughes joined the Sunderland groundstaff in December 1965 and signed professional forms early the following year. Over the next 11 years he started a total of 304 times for The Lads, coming on as a

substitute on 28 occasions and scoring a total of 82 goals.

His brother John, had been a legend at Celtic Park, scoring on his debut as a 17 year old and scoring a total of 189 goals for The Bhoys in 416 appearances and was a member of 6 Championship winning teams but was unfortunately injured when Celtic became the first British team to win the European Cup. He also won 8 Scottish caps and was brought to Roker Park, early in 1973 by Bob Stokoe. On his debut against Millwall the man known as Yogi suffered an injury in the third minute and was substituted soon afterwards. This was his only appearance in a Sunderland shirt but at least he got to play with his brother, unlike.....



.....**Ricardo Gabbiadini.**



Like his more celebrated brother, Ricardo Gabbiadini was signed from York City. He was on the books for nearly three seasons and whilst based at Roker Park had loan spells at four different clubs – Blackpool, Grimsby, Brighton and Crewe but never broke into the Sunderland starting XI. In fact he only made one appearance in the red and white stripes of the first team when he came on at Elland Road in October 1989. The player making way for Ricardo was his elde brother Marco.

Marco of course became a goalscoring favourite on Wearside, grabbing 21 in his first season after being signed from York for £80,000 and helping the team win the Third Division title.

He stayed for 6 years, making a total of 185 appearances, two as a substitute and netting a total of 87 times. On September 17th 1991 he scored a six minute hat-trick against Charlton Athletic at The Valley, his penultimate game for Sunderland, as one week later he was on his way to Selhurst Park for a fee of £1,800,000. Unlike Billy Hughes, Marco never actually played with his brother in a Sunderland shirt and is now to be heard regularly on BBC Radio Newcastle's "*Total Sport*" where he sometimes share the microphone with our own Pete Sixsmith.

